

LOK SABHA

Monday, July 22, 1996/Asadha 31, 1918 (Saka)

(The Lok Sabha met at One Minute Past
Eleven of the Clock)

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MR. SPEAKER : A missing man has come back!

(Interruptions)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Pivatisation of Ports

*161. SHRI RAJU RANA :

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have prepared guidelines on private sector investment in ports;

(b) if so, the main points of the guidelines so formulated;

(c) whether the Government propose to amend the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 to accommodate the changes;

(d) if so, the time by which the said amendment is likely to be introduced;

(e) whether any of the ports in the country have been selected for privatisation of the port operations;

(f) if so, the details thereof. Statewise and the names of private firms interested for the job; and

(g) the role of the State Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) to (g) A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha

STATEMENT

(a) Yes, Sir

(b) The guidelines mainly cover the objectives of private sector participation. The areas identified for private participation, legal framework, options for obtaining private sector participation and procedures to be followed for processing privatisation proposals

(c) No, Sir, as the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 allows for private sector participation.

(d) Does not arise

(e) and (f). All major ports in the country have been advised to seek private sector participation in identified

areas. Private entrepreneurs can participate in the tenders as and when these are invited by the Ports.

(g) State Governments are not concerned with the development of Major Ports.

SHRI RAJU RANA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I did not get the written answer. Please allow other Members.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Sir, the hon. Minister in his answer had said that the guidelines cover the objectives of private sector participation. In the last Session the predecessor of the Minister has told the Press that privatisation had not taken place properly after the liberalisation policy and the press says that privatisation is making no headway.

The Standing Committee has also recommended a comprehensive legislation. A proposal of Rs. 21,000 crore from private participation has been pending with the Government of India. I want to know whether the Minister is going to clear it and if not, what are the difficulties.

Secondly, I want to know whether the Paradip Port Trust has already got a Rs. 7,500 crore loan sanctioned from A.D.B. for handling of more than 10 million tonnes of coal for port handling to be shifted to the South Coast. If it is so, what is the difficulty with the Government? Is there any bureaucratic wrangling?

Thirdly, the Standing Committee of the Department had repeatedly told that there was a necessity for a comprehensive legislation to make more room for private participation. But the previous Minister has not replied in his Press briefing about this. I want to know whether the file is cleared without any bureaucratic wrangling.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : Sir, we have already given the following norms for private sector participation.

1. The private sector would bring in a substantial part of the much-needed resources.
2. With private managerial expertise, efficiency, productivity and quality of service can be expected to be improved.
3. An element of competition would be introduced in port services.
4. Gestation period for setting up new facilities is likely to be reduced.
5. Latest technology from all over the world is likely to be introduced.

These are the things that we have brought in.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : What are the proposals pending with the Government of India?

MR. SPEAKER : Is there any proposal pending before the Government?

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : With regard to the Coal Handling Branch of Paradeep Port, I would like to know whether his Department is having a comprehensive or composite project so that the loan of Rs. 7,500 crore sanctioned by ADB for the last three years can be cleared.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, if you have information, please give. Otherwise give it in writing later.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : I do not have any information regarding this particular port.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Sir, port people should be allowed.

MR. SPEAKER : I did not know that you were a port man.

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister says that-

[English]

Major Port Trusts Act 1963 allows for private sector participation-

[Translation]

I have got a copy of that legislation with me here itself. I would like to know under which Section, the point of private sector participation has been mentioned. He should tell this to the House and secondly this matter relates to Ports and Airports but at present I am not talking about Airports. However, Ports and Airports are always treated as maximum security zones. In case anybody wants to go there, he has to obtain a pass for this purpose. Photography is prohibited there. As in the case of Airports what to talk of foreigners, even Indians are not allowed to do so. There is so much restriction there because we consider Ports and Airports very important for the security of our country. Even then efforts are being made to process this privatisations business clandestinely, we have not forgotten...

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please ask the question.

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : I would like to know as to why that land was allotted to Kargil? Under which Section of the law, it was done? Now they are going to do all these things and that also clandestinely. I have asked a simple question that in which area privatisation is being allowed but the answer is not to the point and deals with something else. Therefore kindly let us know what exactly are the plans with regard to privatisation and under which section of the legislation you can go in for it?

[English]

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : Sir, Section 42 of the Major Port Trusts Act allows private sector participation. The areas identified for privatisation are container terminals, various cargo handling terminals and berths, warehousing and storage facilities, tugs, pilotage, craning services and dry docking and ship repairing facilities.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : It is contained in which Section of the Act?

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : Sir, Section 42 of the Act.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, regarding (e) and (f) parts of the question, we have not received a proper reply. The question is specific. The part (e) asks whether any of the ports in the country have been selected for privatisation of the port operation and part (f) asks, if so, the details thereof. The reply is :

"All major ports in the country have been advised to seek private sector participation in identified areas."

This is not a correct reply. A specific question has been raised and we want a specific answer as to whether any proposal has been received by the Government of India.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : Sir, the answer is very clear. Perhaps, it is not clear to my learned friend. It says that all major ports in the country have been advised to seek private sector participation. There is no identification and specific mention of particular ports and all the eleven ports have been so advised.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : I would like to know whether any port has been selected.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : There is no selection.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : The specific question is whether any port has been selected or not. Why do you not answer this question?

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : There is no question of selection. It is for all the eleven ports. You have to give a proposal and we will approve it.

SHRI RAJU RANA : In addition to this, I want to know whether the Government is considering privatisation of medium and small size ports and if so, whether any consultation is being done with the State Governments.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : The minor ports are within the jurisdiction of the State Governments. They themselves have to decide about privatisation.

SHRI P. SHANMUGAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I cannot boast by saying that the public transport system in my State, Tamil Nadu is the best in the whole country. But I am very sorry to say that the public transport system

in the capital city of our country, New Delhi, has gone from bad to worse. There is no proper transport available for the common man in New Delhi. The Delhi Transport Corporation has already withdrawn many of its services.

MR. SPEAKER : Please come to the question.

SHRI P. SHANMUGAM : I am coming, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : You come to the question. Do not speak in future tense.

SHRI P. SHANMUGAM : What are the steps that the Government propose to take to improve the public transport system in the capital city of New Delhi?

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : Sir, the question is about ports. My friend is asking about transport.

MR. SPEAKER : May I request the senior Members to give a chance to the new comers also.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in part (b) of his reply that the guidelines mainly cover the objectives of private sector participation, the areas identified for private participation, legal framework, options for obtaining private sector participation and procedures to be followed for processing privatisation proposals. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any time limit for processing these proposals.

In respect of Kandla Port, when IOC and IFFCO applied, even after 100 applications were made there was no reply. So I, would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is going to have any time-bound programme for processing these proposals.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : Now, that a suggestion has been made by my hon. friend from the other side, I will consider that.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask a very specific question to the hon. Minister about the areas that he has identified for privatisation. In view of the reservation of those areas for privatisation, the development from the Government side will be stopped in those areas. That is one thing.

Secondly, the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that the State Governments are not concerned with the development of major ports. Since the Union Territories like Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep are under the domain of the Central Government, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether these Union Territories will be looked after by the Union Territories Administration and whether they will do the needful in respect of budgetary allocation and the development of these ports.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN : Sir, I want a separate notice. I will reply after getting the notice.

MR. SPEAKER : Question No. 162, Shri Pinaki Mishra. He is absent.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question is very important. Please allow it.

MR. SPEAKER : No, the hon. Member is not here. What can I do?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I know that it is important. But the hon. Member is absent and he has not even authorised anybody to put this question. So, I cannot help it.

Indira Gandhi Nahar Project

*163. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA :
SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH BHATI :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indira Gandhi Nahar Pariyojna is the largest and most important irrigation project of Rajasthan;

(b) whether the fate of Churu, Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur and Barmer is fully dependent on this project;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Union Government to save these districts of Rajasthan;

(d) whether the Government of Rajasthan have temporarily given its share of 0.6MAF to Punjab under this project;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the time by which it is likely to be restored to Rajasthan as it is facing acute water shortage?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) to (f). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Substantial areas of these districts are covered by Indira Gandhi Nahar Project for irrigation and drinking water.

(c) The details of areas for irrigation covered under these districts are as below :

S.No.	Name of District	Area covered (lakh ha.)
1.	Sriganganagar	1.76
2.	Hanumangarh	2.65
3.	Churu	0.67
4.	Bikaner	5.84
5.	Jodhpur	0.67
6.	Jaisalmer	6.48
7.	Barmer	0.62
Total		18.69